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AS FLU ACTIVITY INCREASES, IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO GET YOUR FLU SHOT



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Pensacola, Fla. – As flu season is well underway with steady and sharp increases in activity over the past several weeks, the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (FDOH-Escambia) encourages everyone to protect against flu by getting a flu shot.

Getting your flu shot can reduce flu illnesses, doctor visits, missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations. Receiving your flu vaccination, if you are healthy, helps to prevent illness in our most vulnerable populations as well.

“Everyone above six months of age should get the flu shot,” says FDOH-Escambia Director, John J. Lanza, MD, PhD, MPH, FAAP. “Pregnant women should get the flu shot to protect themselves and their unborn baby as well as the baby in the first six months until the baby can get a flu shot.”

It takes about two weeks after vaccination for your body to develop protection against the flu. Although flu vaccines can vary in effectiveness from season to season, they continue to be the best way to prevent influenza infection and serious influenza complications.

People at higher risk for flu-related complications include children from birth to age 5, adults over the age of 65, pregnant women and people who have existing medical conditions such as asthma.

Protect Yourself and Others Against Flu

- Get the flu shot. To locate a flu shot near you, contact your physician, your local county health department or use the Florida Department of Health’s flu shot locator: www.floridahealth.gov/findaflushot.
- Practice good hygiene by properly and frequently washing your hands to help prevent the spread of seasonal flu;
- Clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces in your home, school or office; and
- Stay home from work or school if you are sick. Take additional steps to ward off the flu by coughing or sneezing into a tissue or your elbow and avoiding touching your face.
- If you are sick, call your primary care physician for evaluation and treatment.

In most situations, flu can be handled at home especially after consultation with your primary care physician. This prevents overloading acute care facilities, including emergency departments.

For the most current information about flu activity in Florida, please see [Florida's weekly surveillance report, the Florida Flu Review](#).

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About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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